

REMARKS

Claims 1, 15, and 29 have been cancelled from the application without prejudice. Claims 2, 5, 9, 13, 16, 19, 23, 27, 30, 33, 37, 41, and 43 - 45 have been amended, as discussed below. Claims 46 - 48 have been added. No new matter has been introduced with these amendments or added claims, which are supported in the specification as originally filed. Claims 2 - 14, 16 - 28, and 30 - 48 are now in the application.

Claims 2, 16, 30, and 43 - 45 have been amended to clarify the manner in which the cascading among segments occurs, and to remove unintended indefiniteness. Claims 5, 19, 33, and 43 - 45 have been amended to correct newly-discovered improper antecedent basis therein: the term "the protected final segment" has been corrected to "the last protected segment" to align with its antecedent. Claims 9, 23, and 37 have been amended to remove an extraneous word. Claims 13, 27, and 41 have also been amended to correct newly-discovered improper antecedent basis, replacing the term "cascaded tunnels" with "cascaded protected segments". Added Claims 46 - 48 specify limitations adapted from now-cancelled Claims 1, 15, and 29.

Thus, it can be seen that no new matter has been introduced.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

Paragraph 1 of the Office Action dated January 24, 2005 (hereinafter, "the Office Action") states that Claims 1, 15, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. Patent 6,693,878 to Daruwalla et al. These claims have been cancelled from

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the application without prejudice, and this rejection is therefore moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the §102 rejection.

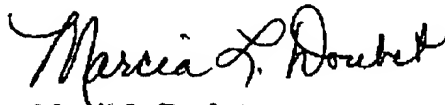
II. Allowable Subject Matter

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action states that Claims 2 - 14, 16 - 28, and 30 - 45 are allowed. Applicants have amended Claims 2, 5, 9, 13, 16, 19, 23, 27, 30, 33, 37, 41, and 43 - 45, and respectfully submit that these claims remain allowable as amended.

III. Conclusion

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the presently outstanding rejection, and allowance of all remaining claims at an early date.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcia L. Doubet
Attorney for Applicant
Reg. No. 40,999

Customer Number for Correspondence: 43168
Phone: 407-343-7586
Fax: 407-343-7587